



December 4, 2012

Joe McDermott, Chair
King County Board of Health
King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue, Suite 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember McDermott:

The executive board of the Issaquah Community Network and its subsidiary organization, the Drug Free Community Coalition, support the concept of a proposed King County secure medicine take-back program funded and run by the pharmaceutical industry. We commend the King County Board of Health for addressing this serious public health and environmental issue. As state-funded agencies engaging community volunteers to promote healthy youth and strong families, the Community Network and the Drug Free Community Coalition are well aware of the devastating impacts of prescription drug addiction, accidental poisonings, and deaths on youth and their families.

We have a special concern about the public education and awareness aspects of the proposed program. One of our youth representatives, a student at Skyline High School, asked 20 of his fellow students about current medicine take-back programs operated by police in the cities of Issaquah and Sammamish. Of those 20 students, only one accurately described how to safely dispose of drugs. The results of this informal survey mirror Network and Coalition experiences in promoting National Take Back Your Meds days with adults. The public is woefully unaware, or badly misinformed, about the urgent need to clear medicine cabinets and appropriately dispose of unused and leftover medicines.

Therefore, as the Board of Health deliberates specific aspects of the proposed program, we encourage you to include the following items:

- A requirement that information about secure medicine take-back procedures be provided with every prescription issued by pharmacies located within King County. Simply directing patients to an informational website through labels, flyers, brochures or posters would be a good start.
- In recognition of the environmental impacts of improper medicine disposal, we would like the Board of Health to also consider a requirement that local water districts and energy companies regularly provide the public with sound information about how to properly dispose of medicines.

Building community through social-emotional wellness of youth and families
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- We would like a specific provision within the proposal for expending funds on the creation and presentation of public service announcements, advertising, and other outreach to the public.
- Our Network and Coalition members have shared numerous stories about doctors, nurses and medical center personnel who were unable to provide information, or who gave incorrect information, about the proper disposal of leftover medicines. Your proposal should include a strong information campaign directed at the medical profession and medical service providers such as hospital personnel.

Again, we strongly commend the King County Board of Health for addressing this important issue, and thank you for your consideration of our special concerns about public education and awareness. We look forward to supporting a specific proposal for a secure medicine take back program when it has been formulated and presented to the public.

Sincerely,



Judy Brewer, Chair
Issaquah Community Network



Vicki Hoffman, Chair
Drug Free Community Coalition

Cc Members, King County Board of Health
 Members, Issaquah City Council
 Members, Sammamish City Council
 Members, Newcastle City Council
 Ava Frisinger, Mayor of Issaquah
 Tom Odell, Mayor of Sammamish
 David Banks, Mayor of Kenmore
 Suzette Cook, Mayor of Kent
 Members, Issaquah Community Network
 Members, Drug Free Community Coalition
 Dr. David Fleming, secretary, King County Board of Health
 Maria Wood, administrator, King County Board of Health
 Margaret Shield, King County Hazardous Waste